

The Endangered Species Act is besieged with problems that must be solved in order to adequately protect listed species and recover them. At the same time, many Western communities feel that they have been assaulted by the ESA in the last two decades. Win-win solutions often evade us as policymakers when it comes to issues that are as contentious as the Endangered Species, but this is truly a win-win for species AND people. Again, my sincere thanks to the chairman and Ranking Member of the Commerce Appropriations Subcommittee for their assistance in finding solutions to this troubling issue.

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, last year this Committee and Congress passed legislation to privatize INMARSAT [International Maritime Satellite Organization]. As part of the privatization, INMARSAT is required to hold an initial public offering [IPO]. INMARSAT's IPO deadline is set for December 31 of this year. Since the IPO market continues to be in bad shape, INMARSAT and its investment advisors would like time to see if the market improves.

INMARSAT was established in 1979 to improve maritime communications especially for distress and safety signals. Over the past two decades, INMARSAT has branched out to serve both maritime markets and increasingly any markets requiring mobility—shipping, oil and gas exploration and the FAA.

Since the IPO market has nosedived, INMARSAT has been waiting for conditions to improve. All of the extensions available to INMARSAT have now been used and the FCC has no more discretion to extend the deadline.

The dilemma is that if INMARSAT does not hold the IPO it will be in violation of U.S. law, and if it does hold the IPO, they could be found in breach of its fiduciary responsibility to its shareholders, possibly subjecting itself to shareholder lawsuits.

My amendment would simply give the FCC the ability to extend the deadline an additional 18 months to see if the IPO market improves. A large number of U.S. companies have pulled their IPOs off the market given market conditions. We are trying to privatize INMARSAT and we should allow them to act like a company.

IN SUPPORT OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS' NEW MIDDLE EAST RADIO NETWORK

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for a proposal by the Broadcasting Board of Governors to enhance and expand service to the Middle East. According to the Chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, the mission of U.S. international broadcasting is to pro-

mote the open communication of information and ideas in support of democracy, and the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information, worldwide. In pursuit of this goal, the Broadcasting Board of Governors has proposed a new station, the Middle East Radio Network.

Would Senator BOXER care to enlighten us on the current U.S. Government sponsored Arabic language broadcasting in the Middle East?

Mrs. BOXER. Yes, I would and I thank the Senator for this opportunity to describe the important results of the board's most recent Language Service Review. This review found that our current broadcasting efforts in the Middle East only reach approximately 2 percent of the population. The board's 2001 Language Service Review highlighted the importance of revitalizing America's Arabic programs in order to offset local Arabic radio broadcasts that often serve to incite violence in the region. An alternative must be offered to the hate radio that so often incites the population to violence.

In February, Broadcasting Board of Governors' representatives traveled throughout the Middle East to gather facts, to talk to government and media officials, and to begin to build a concept for success. The research emphasized the need for a greater U.S. media presence and increased local content to U.S. broadcasts. The researchers found that in spite of widespread opposition to the U.S. policies, there is a strong attraction to the American values of freedom and individualism. In addition, the Arab public would like information about U.S. businesses, technology and advances in medicine. I believe my colleague from Nebraska would like to discuss the Broadcasting Board of Governors' plans to address the shortcomings in our broadcasting services to the Middle East.

Mr. HAGEL. I thank the Senator for the opportunity to speak about the new broadcast service proposed by the Broadcasting Board of Governors for fiscal year 2002. The goal is to provide broadcasts that will appeal to a broad Arabic-speaking audience by providing news and information about events in the region. The working name for this station is the Middle East Radio Network. It would be a 24 hour per day, 7 days per week Arabic-language station to be delivered via a combination of local MW and FM, and shortwave to areas where local delivery is not possible. Programming will include news, music, talk, and interactive programs with listener participation. The Broadcasting Board of Governors plans to feature reliable news and discussion of issues relevant to the audience in a format to appeal to young adults and to news-seekers of all ages. The programs will embody two important themes: individual choice and respect for others.

In a region where more than half of the population is under 25, a successful station must appeal to young people who are the best hope to end the cycle of violence that has ravaged the region.

I know my colleague from Washington would like to discuss the delivery of this new service in the Middle East, and I invite her to comment.

Mrs. MURRAY. The expansion and enhancement of our radio programming in the Middle East are critical to the success of our policies in the region. The proposed service would reach audiences in the West Bank and Gaza, the Gulf, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Sudan in the most popular media of AM, FM and satellite program delivery. This is an area where we cannot afford to deliver our message through a third party broadcaster, and we must deliver accurate information about events occurring in the region. We must be an accessible voice in the region with a program and format that will attract a broader audience. This expanded service will also provide the region with increased exposure to news and information and Western journalistic standards of a free press. This provision of information will help counter the existing regional broadcasts which are often censored or under state control.

I am confident this increased information will help us further our policy goals of establishing peace and stability in the region. In light of the terrible events of this week, I appreciate the opportunity to register my support for this program and our international broadcasting efforts. I would also add that I concur with the comments of my colleagues.

Mrs. BOXER. I also concur with the remarks of my colleagues.

Mr. HAGEL. I also concur with my colleagues and would like to ask Senator INOUE to provide his final comments.

Mr. INOUE. I concur in the comments of my colleagues about the importance of the enhanced programming in the Middle East proposed by the Broadcasting Board of Governors. It is my hope that the proposed service will help disseminate news and information throughout the region. I am pleased that the Broadcasting Board of Governors has committed to providing this much-needed service and look forward to working with my colleagues to support the Middle East Radio Network.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

STEPFAMILY DAY

• Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize National Stepfamily Day, a day that reminds us that families don't need to be bound by biology to be grounded in love and respect.

The Stepfamily Association of America and 38 States recognize September